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WOMEN IN THE WORK WORLD



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1981 Census of Canada

WOMEN IN THE WORK WORLD

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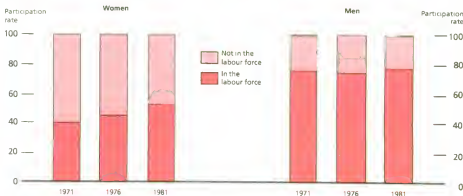
INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of this century the number of women in the Canadian labour force has been steadily increasing. (For a definition of the labour force, see "Notes" section.) The 1981 Census data showed that for the first time more than 50% of women 15 years and over were in the labour force. There were, in fact, 4.9 million women either employed or unemployed. By comparison, there were 7.2 million men who reported themselves as being in the labour force in the 1981 Census.

Chart 1 shows the increase in participation rates for women and men over the last 10 years. Participation rates are defined as the number of people who are in the labour force, as a percentage of the number of people who are 15 years and over. Between 1971 and 1976, the participation rate for women changed from about 40% to about 45%. Between 1976 and 1981, the percentage went up from 45% to 52%.

Chart 1

Historical Labour Force Participation Rates for Women and Men 15 Years and Over, Canada, 1971, 1976 and 1981



Note: Data based on 1971 labour force definition.
Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Catalogue No. 94-805
1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data

Increases in women's participation were evident all across the country, although, in general, participation rates were somewhat lower in the East than in the West. In 1981, the lowest participation rate for women was in Newfoundland at 42% while in British Columbia, it was 53%. It reached a high of 67% in the Yukon.

Female participation rates were affected by many factors: the age, the level of education, and the number and ages of children, to name just a few.

Results of the 1981 Census show that:

- More than 60% of women aged 15 to 24 were in the labour force.
- The greatest increases in female participation in the labour force since 1971 were among married women.
- The highest participation was found among single women 20 years and over.
- Seventy-eight per cent of women with a university degree, but only 26.5% of women with less than Grade 9 education, were in the labour force.
- As in 1971, women were concentrated in clerical, sales, medicine and health and teaching occupations. However, their numbers were increasing in relation to male workers in fields such as management and administration. In 1971, 15% of people reporting jobs in management and administration were women. By 1981, 25% of these jobs were reported by women.
- About 51% of all female workers worked less than a full year in 1980.

- Average employment income for women who worked in 1980 was highest in teaching occupations.
- The largest increases in average employment income between 1970 and 1980 occurred in sales and health related occupations.
- Average female employment income remained below the average employment income of male workers. In 1980, average employment income for women who worked full-time for a full year was \$13,677; for men, the equivalent figure was \$21,441.

A GENERAL PROFILE OF WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

Age...

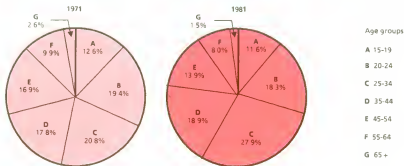
How old are most of the Canadian women in the labour market? In 1971, approximately one-fifth of the women in the labour market were between 25 and 34 years. Over the 10-year period between 1971 and 1981, the picture changed. By 1981, a large new wave of younger women had come along as a result of the post-war baby boom. These women, then in their late twenties and early thirties joined the labour market in unprecedented numbers. As a result, the 25 to 34 age group made up a considerably larger proportion (28%) of the labour force than it had in 1971. The 35- to 44-year olds increased their share

slightly, while the youngest age group, the 15- to 19-year olds and the group who were 45 years and over formed smaller proportions of the pie in 1981 than in 1971.

Not only did the number of women aged 25 to 34 in the labour force increase, but those in this age group increased their participation in the labour force by more than any other age group. Between 1971 and 1981, the participation rate of women aged 25 to 34 jumped from 45% to 66%.

Chart 2

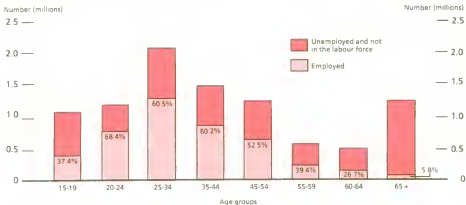
Percentage Distribution by Age Groups of Women 15 Years and Over in the Labour Force, Canada, 1971 and 1981



Note: Data based on 1971 labour force definition.
Source: 1971 Census of Canada, Catalogue No. 94-704
1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data

Chart 3

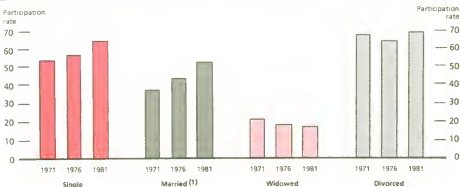
Ratio of Employed Labour Force to the Population 15 Years and Over by Age Groups, for Women, Canada, 1981



Source: 1981 Census User Summary Tape - SDE81811

Chart 4

Labour Force Participation Rates of Women 15 Years and Over, by Marital Status, Canada, 1971, 1976 and 1981



(1) Married includes separated

Note: Data based on 1971 labour force definition

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Catalogue No. 94-804

1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data

Participation rates of women in all other age groups increased as well, with the exception of women 65 years and over. These women experienced a decline in participation from a rate of over 8% in 1971 to 5.5% in 1981 (based on 1971 definition).

Chart 3 illustrates another way of looking at the number of women who go to work. First, it shows the age distribution of the total female population. In addition, the proportion of women who are employed within each of the age groups is indicated in the columns. In 1981, for example, 5.8% of women over 65 years were employed while 68.4% of those between the ages of 20 and 24 had jobs. The large size of the 25 to 34 age group and the considerable number of these women who were employed are readily apparent.

... and Marital Status

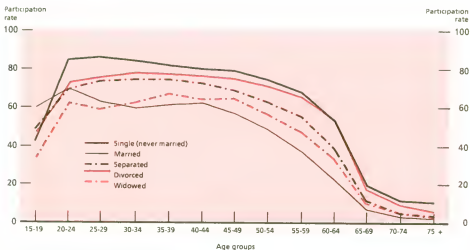
How does getting married affect the decision to work? And how has this changed over the past decade? While the participation rates of married

women rose sharply over the decade, these women still had lower participation than women who were divorced or single. The rate for married women climbed by 15 percentage points, from 37% in 1971 to 52% in 1981. The participation rate also increased for single women during the decade, although not quite as dramatically as for those who were married. For divorced women, there was little change in participation rates. Widowed women, concentrated in the oldest age groups, experienced a decline in participation from 21% in 1971 to 17% in 1981.

Other interesting differences become apparent when both marital status and age are studied. A sharp rise in participation rates occurred between women in the 15 to 19 age group and those in the 20 to 24 age group. This rise is particularly noticeable for single women.

Chart 5

Labour Force Participation Rates of Women 15 Years and Over by Marital Status and Age Groups, Canada, 1981



Source: 1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data

After the age of 20, single women held the lead in the percentage in the labour force, rising to over 80%. In comparison with women of any other marital status, single women had the highest participation rates in each subsequent age group.

The surge of women into the labour force in their early twenties was almost as strong among married women as among singles. Getting married did not mean staying out of the work force, as it did for most women a generation ago. The proportion working or seeking work was high. It was only after age 24 that participation rates dropped for married women. After that initial high point, they stayed, in general, well below those of other marital status categories.

Divorced women were most likely, next to single women, to be in the labour force. Their participation rate reached a peak between the ages of 30 and 34 and remained high until the age of 60.

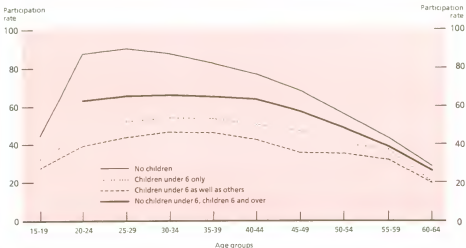
Presence of Children

One of the key factors in deciding whether to seek a job or continue to work, if already employed, is the presence of children. (For a definition of children, see "Notes" section.) In 1981, the highest participation rates were found among women aged 20 to 44 who had no children at home. Rates dropped significantly for women with children in the home. Women under age 45 with children 6 years and over only had the highest participation of those women with children, with a rate of 65%.

The trend for women with children under 6 years showed an increase in participation rate up to age 39 followed by a gradual decline as the age of women increased. It should be recognized however that after the age of 39, fewer and fewer women have children under 6 years.

Chart 6

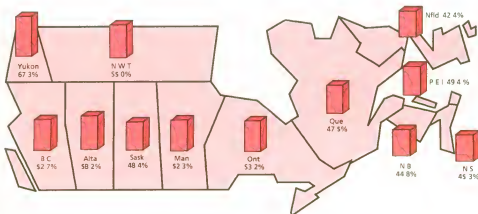
Labour Force Participation Rates of Women in Occupied Private Households by Age Groups and Presence of Children, Canada, 1981



Source: 1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data

Chart 7

**Labour Force Participation Rates of Women 15 Years and Over,
Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1981**



Source: 1981 Census User Summary Tape - S0E1821

It is interesting to note that for all age groups of mothers, the rates for women with children under 6 only remained consistently above those of women who have children under 6 as well as older children.

Differences Across Canada

The 1981 Census showed that in the Eastern provinces, from Quebec to the Atlantic, less than 50% of women had or looked for jobs. The participation rates in this part of Canada varied from a low of 42.4% in Newfoundland to 49.4% in Prince Edward Island. Women in Saskatchewan also had a participation rate slightly less than 50%. However, Ontario, the other Western provinces and the territories had rates ranging from 52.3% in Manitoba to a high of 67.3% in the Yukon.

In general, the participation rate was highest for women who lived in large cities with a population of over 100,000. An interesting exception to this was British Columbia where 58% of women in rural farm areas were in the labour force. In most provinces, women living in smaller urban areas tended to show the second highest participation rates, with those in rural farm and rural non-farm areas following respectively. This picture may have been affected by underreporting of unpaid work in family businesses and family farms in the 1981 Census. This underreporting might have lowered participation rates in rural farm areas while showing little effect in urban areas.

Table 1

Women 15 Years and Over and Women in the Labour Force, Canada and Provinces, 1981

	Women 15 years and over	Women in the labour force
Canada	9,457,690	4,898,890
Newfoundland	198,190	83,980
Prince Edward Island	46,080	22,775
Nova Scotia	326,965	148,130
New Brunswick	261,935	117,270
Quebec	2,548,385	1,211,205
Ontario	3,405,425	1,878,300
Manitoba	396,435	207,355
Saskatchewan	359,225	174,005
Alberta	818,265	476,240
British Columbia	1,074,820	566,570
Yukon	8,020	5,395
Northwest Territories	13,945	7,665

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, National Series, Vol. 1, Catalogue No. 92-915.

There is no single portrait of a Canadian woman who goes out to work. She may be young or old, married or single, childless or with young children; she may live in any part of Canada. What is her level of education? What kind of work does she do? How does it compare with jobs held by male workers? What kind of income does she earn?

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Level of Education

Women with secondary school education and beyond are much more apt to be in the labour force than those with less than high school education. In 1981, over three-quarters of the women who were university graduates were in the labour market while this was true of only a quarter of those who had achieved less than Grade 9. Approximately 45% of women who had high school education but who had not received a certificate or diploma were involved in the work force. By contrast, those who had obtained a

graduation certificate or diploma from a high school had a participation rate of 63%.

This phenomenon can be seen in all age groups although it is particularly true for the young. The participation rate for women aged 15 to 24 who have high school education but no certificate or diploma was 43.3%. Those with a certificate or diploma had a participation rate of 71%. For women aged 25 to 44, the comparable rates were 57.5% and 63.3% respectively.

Chart 8

Labour Force Participation Rates of Women 15 Years and Over, by Highest Degree, Certificate or Diploma, Canada, 1981

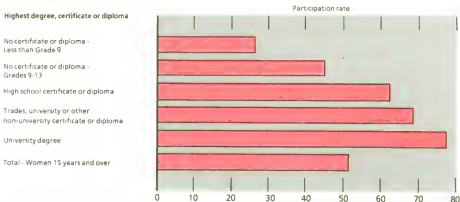
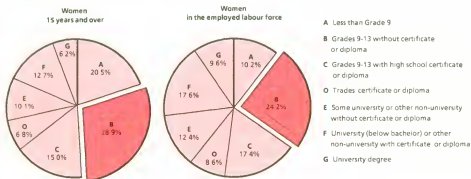


Chart 9

Percentage Distribution by Highest Level of Schooling of Women 15 Years and Over and of Women in the Employed Labour Force, Canada, 1981



Source: 1981 Census User Summary Tape - EA81031

Women with higher levels of schooling made up a larger proportion of the employed labour force than they did of all women 15 years and over. Approximately two-thirds of women who were employed had a certificate or diploma or at least some education in addition to high school. Of all women 15 years and over, approximately 50% had achieved these levels of education.

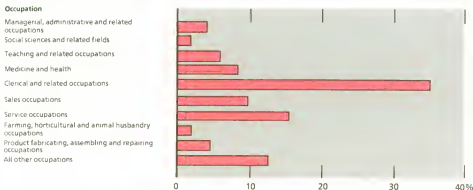
Occupations

In 1981, there were approximately 4.5 million women in Canada who had jobs in the labour market. Their number had grown by almost 60% since 1971.

Although the number of women with jobs had increased dramatically over the decade, they continued to work in occupations in which women have traditionally been in the majority. In fact, the percentage of women in the experienced labour force who reported working in clerical, service, sales, medicine and health and teaching occupations increased to 74% in 1981 from 71% ten years earlier.

Chart 10(a)

Percentage Distribution by Selected Occupation Major Groups of Women in the Experienced Labour Force,⁽¹⁾ Canada, 1981



(1) The experienced labour force is derived by deleting from the total labour force persons 15 years and over who have never worked or worked only prior to January 1, 1980.

Note: Data based on 1971 labour force definition.

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, National Series, Vol. 1, Catalogue No. 92-920

The general movement of women into the labour force was noticeable in all occupations. There was a strong increase in the number of women in managerial and administrative occupations (government administration, administration in medicine, personnel officers, etc.), occupations in natural sciences (chemists, biologists, etc.), in engineering and mathematics, and in social sciences and related fields (sociologists, social workers, lawyers, librarians, etc.). In 1971, women reported 15% of the jobs in management and administration; by 1981, they reported 25%. In 1971, they reported only 7% of the jobs in natural sciences, engineering and mathematics; by 1981, they reported 14%. In social sciences, the percentage went up from 37% in 1971 to 53% in 1981.

It should be noted, however, that the increases in the number of women reporting, for example, management and administration occupations were not evenly distributed. In 1971, women reported 3.7% of the upper management and administrative positions. By 1981, this figure had risen to 6.4%.

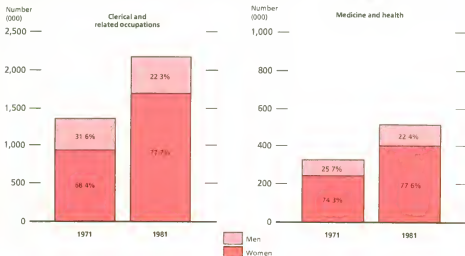
Chart 10(b)

**Numerical and Percentage Distribution by Sex of the Experienced Labour Force
15 Years and Over in Selected Occupations, Canada, 1971 and 1981**



Chart 10(b) - Concluded

**Numerical and Percentage Distribution by Sex of the Experienced Labour Force
15 Years and Over in Selected Occupations, Canada, 1971 and 1981**



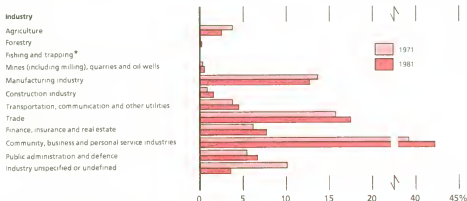
Note: Data based on 1971 labour force definition

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, National Series, Vol. 1, Catalogue No. 92-920

Industries

Women are concentrated in the community, business and personal service industries and in the trade industries. Services such as education, health and welfare, amusement and recreation, and retail trade are included in these industries. In 1971, about 55% of women in the experienced labour force worked in organizations which provided these services. By 1981, this figure had risen to 60%. Only 12% of women in the experienced labour force were engaged in manufacturing.

Percentage Distribution by Industry Division of Women 15 Years and Over in the Experienced Labour Force, (1) Canada, 1971 and 1981



* Figure too small to be expressed

(1) The experienced labour force is derived by deleting from the total labour force persons 15 years and over who have never worked or worked only prior to January 1, 1980

Note: Data based on 1971 labour force definition

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, National Series, Vol. 1, Catalogue No. 92-925

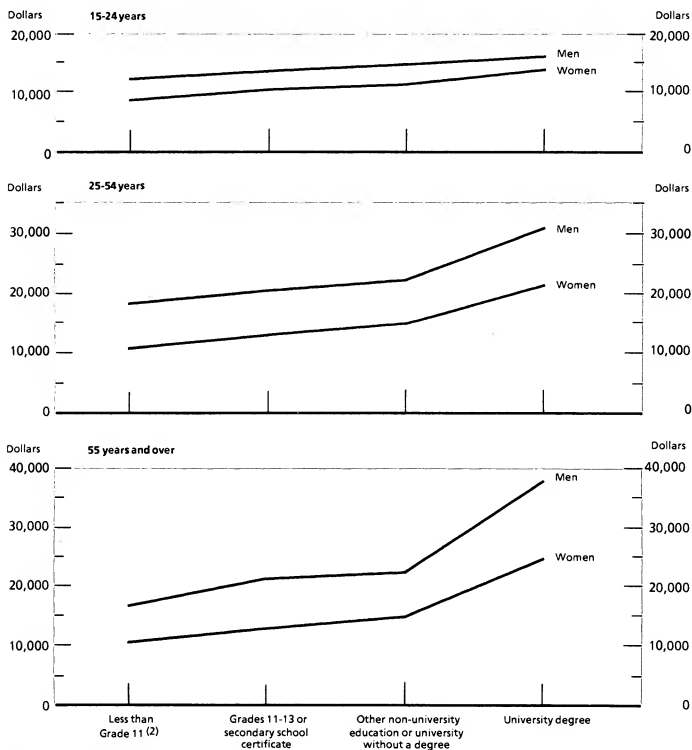
Differences in Employment Income by Sex

Both education and age are related to higher average employment income. When average employment income is compared for men and women who worked full-time for at least 49 weeks in 1980, the following picture emerges: men earned consistently more than women at every educational level and age group. Women's earnings were fairly close to those of men when both were in their teens and early twenties. However, differences became more noticeable for older groups. The earnings of men aged 25 to 54 with university degrees rose to over \$30,000 compared to an average employment income of below \$21,000 for those with only a high school diploma. For women of the same age group, the gap between them and their male counterparts

became wider. Women with a high school certificate had an average employment income of around \$13,000. Those with a university degree earned on average \$21,000. Thus, women in this age group with university degrees earned scarcely more than men who had completed high school. For the oldest group of workers, men with university degrees reached an average employment income of \$38,000. This compared with slightly less than \$25,000 for women of the same age and academic standing.

Chart 12

**Average 1980 Employment Income for Men and Women Who Worked Full-time,
Full-year (1) in 1980 by Age Groups and Level of Schooling, Canada, 1981**



(1) 49-52 weeks mostly full-time.

(2) Includes "no schooling or kindergarten only".

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

Table 2

Women 15 Years and Over Who Worked Full-year (49-52 Weeks) Mostly Full-time in 1970 and 1980 by Occupation and Average Employment Income (in Constant 1980 Dollars), Canada

	Average employment income		
	In 1970	In 1980	Percentage change
	\$	\$	%
All occupations	10,687	13,677	28.0
Managerial, administrative and related occupations	15,489	18,712	20.8
Occupations in natural sciences, engineering and mathematics	15,117	18,414	21.8
Occupations in social sciences and related fields	16,048	17,627	9.8
Occupations in religion	8,011	11,910	48.7
Teaching and related occupations	16,060	20,782	29.4
Occupations in medicine and health	12,532	16,652	32.9
Artistic, literary, recreational and related occupations	13,699	15,329	11.9
Clerical and related occupations	10,474	12,559	19.9
Sales occupations	8,855	11,930	34.7
Service occupations	7,509	9,606	27.9
Farming, horticultural and animal husbandry occupations	5,731	7,522	31.3
Fishing, hunting, trapping and related occupations
Forestry and logging occupations	...	15,517	...
Mining and quarrying including oil and gas field occupations	...	18,653	...
Processing occupations	9,330	11,794	26.4
Machining and related occupations	9,906	11,881	19.9
Product fabricating, assembling and repairing occupations	8,400	10,429	24.2
Construction trades occupations	12,276	15,423	25.6
Transport equipment operating occupations	10,450	13,463	28.8
Materials handling and related occupations, n.e.c.	8,941	11,277	26.1
Other crafts and equipment operating occupations	9,878	12,409	25.6
Occupations not elsewhere classified	9,200	11,377	23.7

... Non-zero counts less than 250, and corresponding averages and percentage changes are not shown.

Source: 1971 and 1981 Censuses of Canada, unpublished data.

Changes in Employment Income

Between 1970 and 1980, average employment income (in constant 1980 dollars) increased by almost 28% for women who worked mostly full-time for at least 49 weeks. Employment income remained low in some occupations such as service jobs and farming, but even these showed substantial increases. In some of the fields where many women work, increases in average employment income were quite large; for example, about 35% in sales occupations and slightly less than 33% in medicine and health.

The smallest increases in average employment income over the decade were in jobs in the social sciences fields (about 10%), but employment income for these occupations was relatively high.

Part-year and Part-time Jobs

Part-year and part-time work is often of interest to women who wish to participate in the labour force, but who have child care or other responsibilities which impede them from doing full-time, full-year work. The census defines a full-year worker as one who works between 49 and 52 weeks of the year.

In 1980, 51.1% of women who had jobs worked only part of the year, that is less than 49 weeks. Amongst the age groups, the young women aged 15 to 24, many of whom were students, had the highest percentage of employment in the 1 to 26 weeks group. The age group with the lowest percentage of part-year workers was that of the 45- to 64-year olds.

Women 25 years and over were most likely to work full-year. Amongst these women, those who were single with no children present had the greatest tendency to full-year work. These were followed closely by married women living with their husbands who, similarly, had no children present.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution by Number of Weeks Worked for Women Who Worked in 1980, by Age Groups, Canada

Number of weeks worked in 1980	Age groups				
	Total	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 +
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1-26 weeks	27.4	42.1	22.7	18.3	28.2
27-48 weeks	23.7	24.1	23.6	23.0	27.2
49-52 weeks	48.9	33.8	53.7	58.7	44.6

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, Catalogue No. 92-916, Table 1.

Table 4

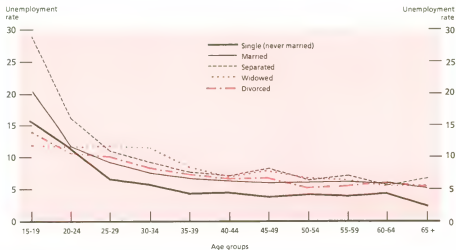
Percentage Distribution by Whether the Weeks Worked in 1980 Were Mostly Full-time or Mostly Part-time, for Women Who Worked in 1980, by Age Groups, Canada

Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 1980	Age groups				
	Total	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 +
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mostly full-time weeks	69.2	65.4	72.7	67.9	53.1
Mostly part-time weeks	30.8	34.6	27.3	32.1	46.9

Source: 1981 Census of Canada, Catalogue No. 92-916, Table 1

Chart 13

Unemployment Rates by Marital Status and Age Group of Women 15 Years and Over, Canada, 1981



Source: 1981 Census of Canada, unpublished data

Of those women who worked for any period of time in 1980, more than 30% of them worked mostly part-time. Part-time work was most prevalent among the youngest and oldest age groups.

Unemployment among Women

It is the youngest age groups, especially persons between the ages of 15 and 19 who have been the hardest hit by unemployment. The 1981 Census showed an unemployment rate of 16% for women and 15% for men of this age group. The rate was lower for persons in their twenties, and for women, it continued to decline for each subsequent age group. For those aged 20 and over, the lowest rates of unemployment were for single women.

The rates were higher for women in all other marital status groups, that is those who were separated, widowed, divorced or married.

Another factor related to unemployment is the level of education which a woman has achieved. In general, the less education she has, the more likely she is to be unemployed. It is of interest to note that in 1981, men with the same level of schooling had consistently lower rates of unemployment.

Chart 14

Unemployment Rates by Highest Degree, Certificate or Diploma of Men and Women 15 Years and Over, Canada, 1981



IN SUMMARY

Over the last decade, the number of women in the labour force has been steadily increasing. Although the increases were most apparent for married women, the participation rates for single women also climbed. Women held jobs in occupations and industries in which they have traditionally worked, although they also increased their numbers in what were formerly considered to be male-oriented fields. In general, women continue to earn lower average employment income than men of the same age and with the same level of education.

Over the next decade, women will probably continue to join the labour market. They may also continue to diversify in their choice of occupation. Thus, in the next 10 years, we will likely see even greater changes in women's labour market activity than we have seen in the past.

NOTES

Labour Force

In the 1981 Census, a person was considered to be part of the LABOUR FORCE if he or she was EMPLOYED, that is, if he or she had a job, or if he or she was UNEMPLOYED. To be considered unemployed, he or she was either actively seeking a job, expecting to return to a job from which he or she had been laid off, or about to report to a job. All other people were identified as NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE.

Children

In the 1981 Census, children were defined as sons or daughters (including adopted and stepchildren) who have never married, regardless of age, and are living in the same dwelling as their parent(s).

Canada has taken a census of population every ten years from 1851 and every five years from 1956. The last census was taken on June 3, 1981. The census data constitute the most important single source of information on the population of Canada by many geographic areas from the national and provincial levels down to smaller groups such as cities, towns and municipalities. These data include: information on the number of people who live in Canada; their characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, language, educational level and occupation; number and types of families; and types of dwellings. Census information is used for a variety of purposes by private individuals, governments at all levels, educational institutions, business people and other organizations.

As part of a program to supplement 1981 Census statistical reports, a special series of popular studies has been undertaken on selected topics of public interest. Each study is a description of major trends and patterns. The data used are from the 1981 Census and other relevant sources. This series is designed for use at the high school and community college levels. However, it could also be of interest to the general public.

WOMEN IN THE WORK WORLD is one of the reports in this series. It brings together under one cover highlights of information about the labour market situation of women. Other studies in the series are being published at about the same time or within the next few months.

The manuscript for this study was prepared in the Social Statistics Field by Patricia Grainger.

Editing services were provided by Federal and Media Relations Division. Census Operations Division, in cooperation with Production and Support Services Division, coordinated the design, composition and printing.